

Quotes about Learning

MTEI Cohort 7, Seminar 6

1. As an individual passes from one situation to another, his world, his environment expands or contracts...What he has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situation which follows. The process goes on as long as life and learning continues...A divided world, a world whose parts and aspects do not hang together, is at once a sign and a cause of a divided personality...A fully integrated person exists only when successive experiences are integrated with one another.

- Dewey, J. (1963). *Experience and Education*. New York: Collier Books, p. 44

2. If we want to support students in learning and we believe that learning is a product of thinking, then we must need to be clear about what it is that we are trying to support. What kinds of mental activities are we trying to encourage in our students, colleagues and friends? When we ask teachers in workshops, “What kinds of thinking do you value and want to promote in your classroom?” or “What kinds of thinking does that lesson force students to do?” a large percentage of teachers are stumped. They simply have not been asked to look at their teaching through the lens of thinking before. They ask their students to think all the time, but they have never stepped back to consider just what it is they specifically want their students to do mentally. However, if we are going to make thinking visible in our classrooms, then the first step will be for us as teachers to make the various forms, dimensions and processes of thinking visible to ourselves.

- Ritchart, R. Church, M. and Morrison, K. (2011). *Making Thinking Visible: How to Promote engagement, understanding and independence for all learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 5.

3. We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment — and that is not easy. It is painful as well, because it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your own sense of who you are, and being willing to see yourself in the unflattering light of another's angry gaze. It is not easy, but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else and the only way to start the dialogue.

- Delpit, L. (2006). “The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People’s Children” in *Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* New York: The New Press, p. 46-47.

4. In reality, every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self. The writer’s work is merely a kind of optical instrument which he offers to the reader to enable him to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have experienced in himself. And the recognition by the reader in his own self of what the books says is the proof of its veracity.

- Proust, M. (1981). *Remembrance of Things Past, “Time Regained,” Vol. 3*, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrief, Terence Kilmartin and Andreas Mayor. New York: Random House, p. 949

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5. There's a radical – and wonderful – new idea here – the idea that every citizen is capable of the kind of intellectual competence previously attained by only a small minority...[A]ll children could and should be inventors of their own theories, critics of other people's ideas, analyzers of evidence, and makers of their own personal marks on the world. It's an idea with revolutionary implications. If we take it seriously.

- Meier, D. (1995). *The Power of Their Ideas: Lessons for America from a small school in Harlem*. Boston: Beacon Press, p. 4.